

Re: Fw: white mesa site groundwater

Terry Brown

to:

Robert Duraski

09/19/2011 12:03 PM

Cc:

Deborah Lebow-Aal

Hide Details

From: Terry Brown/R8/USEPA/US

To: Robert Duraski/R8/USEPA/US@EPA

Cc: Deborah Lebow-Aal/R8/USEPA/US@EPA

Hi Bob - (b)(6) I'll come by tomorrow.

-----Robert Duraski/R8/USEPA/US wrote: -----

To: Terry Brown/R8/USEPA/US@EPA  
 From: Robert Duraski/R8/USEPA/US  
 Date: 09/16/2011 12:28PM  
 Cc: Deborah Lebow-Aal/R8/USEPA/US@EPA  
 Subject: Fw: white mesa site groundwater

Hi Terry,

These documents Scott sent were written by Utah and do point out some important flaws in the liners leak detection system.

----- Forwarded by Robert Duraski/R8/USEPA/US on 09/16/2011 12:25 PM -----

From: Scott Clow <sclow@utemountain.org>  
 To: Robert Duraski/R8/USEPA/US@EPA  
 Cc: Celene Hawkins <chawkins@utemountain.org>, Peter Ortego <portego@utemountain.org>, "H. Michael Keller" <mKeller@vancott.com>, Colin Larrick <clarrick@utemountain.org>, Dakota Hargett <dhargett@utemountain.org>, Mark Smith <mark.smith@rrdintlcorp.com>  
 Date: 09/16/2011 10:29 AM  
 Subject: white mesa site groundwater

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Hi Bob-

Thanks for the update. I spoke with Loren Morton in Salt Lake on Tuesday after the Radiation Control Board Meeting there- he is the DRC point person on the groundwater permit for the White Mesa Mill. They have a decision to make by the end of September about the ongoing tolling agreement with Denison regarding the nitrate and chloride contamination in the shallow groundwater. Either they reach an agreement with Denison about the source of the contamination based on the monitoring and hypotheses put forth by Denison and their consultants or they start fining them daily on October 1. I asked Loren if active remediation was on the table and he could not get into that level of detail because it was an ongoing enforcement action, but we will all know very soon what the State and Denison plan to do about it. They had multiple meetings scheduled this week with Denison.

See the attached letter from the from the last Director of DRC regarding nitrates in groundwater, aka the "smoking gun" letter. It is our position that what is described in the State's justification for a groundwater permit in this letter in 1999 is exactly what occurred less than 10 years later and now being debated by Denison, formerly IUC- catastrophic liner leakage. It is interesting to me because when I started working for the Tribe in the mid-90's their mantra was "if there is no chloride contamination in the groundwater, then there is no leakage." They told me this on multiple occasions and multiple mill tours. Now that the chloride is elevated they are changing their story, and Mr. Frinefrock's position that nitrates be included seems to have been accurate.

Cheers,  
Scott

-----Original Message-----

From: Duraski.Robert@epamail.epa.gov [<mailto:Duraski.Robert@epamail.epa.gov>]  
Sent: Friday, September 16, 2011 9:43 AM  
To: Scott Clow  
Cc: Brown.Terry@epamail.epa.gov  
Subject: Re: white mesa site visit this summer?

Hi Scott,

The trip was canceled because the state provided us information that indicated that there may be a release of nitrates to the groundwater. The numbers are small and we can't tell if it is from the impoundment or from an upstream source. We are reviewing their groundwater data now to try and understand the issue. Here is the state's web page on the issue:

[http://www.radiationcontrol.utah.gov/Uranium\\_Mills/IUC/nitrate/nitrate.htm](http://www.radiationcontrol.utah.gov/Uranium_Mills/IUC/nitrate/nitrate.htm)

Hope all is well,  
RD

From: Scott Clow <[sclow@utemountain.org](mailto:sclow@utemountain.org)>  
To: Robert Duraski/R8/USEPA/US@EPA  
Cc: Randy Brown03/R8/USEPA/US@EPA  
Date: 09/15/2011 03:52 PM  
Subject: white mesa site visit this summer?

HI Bob-

I was wondering if you and Terry made a visit to White Mesa this summer as we discussed in March when I was at EPA, and if so, what your determination was for the qualifications of the Denison facility to receive RCRA wastes?

Thanks,  
Scott

*(See attached file: DRctoIUC\_021199\_smokinggunletterp3.pdf) (See attached file: DRctoIUC\_021199\_smokinggunletterp1-2.pdf)*

[attachment "DRctoIUC\_021199\_smokinggunletterp3.pdf" removed by Terry Brown/R8/USEPA/US]  
[attachment "DRctoIUC\_021199\_smokinggunletterp1-2.pdf" removed by Terry Brown/R8/USEPA/US]